

Office of Neighborhood Development

The mission of the Office of Neighborhood Development is:

- A. Empowering neighborhoods and their residents through training, education, communication, and recreation,**
- B. Working with existing neighborhood groups to identify and undertake projects that have positive impact,**
- C. Creating and strengthening neighborhood organizations (NOs),**
- D. And advocating for neighborhoods of the City of Reading.,**

Goals and Objectives - 2007

OND will again expand the projects that it undertakes by expanding the number of NOs, supporting the growth and projects of existing NOs, and partnering with more organizations to maximize resources that serve the City of Reading.

The office will continue to pursue new ways to prevent and eliminate graffiti. A specific graffiti notification system is being established that will provide each NO with both information and materials that will allow almost immediate removal. In support of the NOs will be local service organizations. OND will continue to prepare grants to get materials and equipment for eliminating graffiti.

OND will partner with local organizations dedicated to getting graffiti “taggers” and “bombers” engaged in positive artistic endeavors that will educate youth on the negative effects of graffiti and the positive side of muraling.

Our organization will continue to certify NOs and prepare advanced NOs for Level 2 certification – a level that prepares them for many aspects of 501(c)(3) status, as well preparing them to become grant partners with the City of Reading. It is planned that 3 – 5 NOs will be ready for Level 2 in 2007.

With the increased focus on trash and litter in the City of Reading, OND has been asked to partner on an educational level approach to litter removal. Although much of the education will be focused on school-aged children, much can be accomplished at neighborhood levels by supporting partnerships in all of the neighborhoods. In addition, our department will expand its efforts with volunteers and NOs to remove litter not picked up by Public Works or private haulers. Because Reading Beautification, Inc. is the local affiliate of Keep American Beautiful, we partner with it on the Great American Cleanup and other educational/environmental projects.

In this same vein, OND will work closely with the Public Works Department to maximize the utilization of “orange bags” and “rolloffs” where NOs work to clean debris from their neighborhoods. With the continued emphasis on eliminating litter in the city, it will be important that volunteers have the resources that they need to complete their work.

In 2007 OND will coordinate the Group Workcamp program brought to the City of Reading by Neighborhood Housing Services in 2005. The program will continue virtually unchanged. However, OND has undergone training to manage the project and will continue with the partners developed in the past. Because of OND's connections to the faith community, the RSD, and other organizations in the city, the program can be enhanced in 2007.

Because of OND's close connections with neighborhoods and their residents in the City of Reading, and because of its 501(c)(3) status, the organization will play a key role in the funding (receiving) and administration of both the Elm Street and Blueprint Communities projects in 2007. Our department will assist in the development of other neighborhood organizations such as Community Development Corporations in 2007 and beyond.

There are six new projects planned:

1. Group Workcamps – approximately 85 homes in the City of Reading that will be improved by general maintenance and painting.
2. Expanded Midnight Ministry in cooperation with the city/county faith community to provide support to city resources at “hotspots” that result from criminal activities.
3. Expanded youth mentoring programs in cooperation with the RSD and faith and service organizations to address issues raised at the City of Reading crime forums.
4. Neighborhood surveys to determine the level of community satisfaction with residents with their neighborhood and city services. This will be an extended partnership with Albright College and other local colleges.
5. Improved communication with inner city neighborhoods at the “grass roots” level. This project will determine ways to communicate with many groups in the City that are rarely involved in the community.
6. Citizen's Code Inspection Program in partnership with the Codes Inspection Department.
7. Problem Oriented Policing in partnership with the RPD.

In general, our goals in 2007 will be:

1. Expand the Office of Neighborhood Development's role in the community through developing new partnerships with existing organizations such as churches, schools, non-profits, and businesses
2. Establish new and support existing neighborhood organizations throughout Reading to make them successful
3. Identify and execute “success” projects with neighborhood organizations
4. Continue our role in both minor and major projects such as the Great American Cleanup, Group Workcamp, Elm Street Project, Blueprint Communities, Council of Neighborhoods, Anti-Graffiti and Mural projects, Confluence Point Park, Reading Classic Professional Biking Tour and the projects mentioned above.
5. Leadership development of neighborhood leaders and expanded communication among organizations

Programs, Projects, Ongoing Activities for 2007

Programs and Projects

Blueprint Communities - Neighborhood Advisory Board
Blueprint Communities - Project Identification
Lessons in Leadership Training
Great American Cleanup
Graffiti Elimination Teams
Graffiti Elimination Neighborhood Resources
Playground Mural Project
Midnight Ministry – expanded/flexible for “hot spots”
RiverPlace - CreekQuest
Confluence Point Park Project
Confluence Point Park Project - Ongoing Development
Community Oriented Policing
Reading Classic PCT
Community Gardens
Schuylkill Trail projects
Reading Group Workcamps
Mayors Neighborhood Matching Grant Program
Litter Education Program
Freshmen Orientation with Albright and Alvernia Colleges
Litter Pickup Program
Youth Mentoring Programs with partnering organizations/churches
Lessons in Leadership Training
Neighborhood Organization Certification

New and Developing Neighborhood Organizations

Southwest NOs Reorganization/Blueprint/Elm St.
Callowhill Business Owners NO
900 Block of Penn St./North 9th Street NO
Oley Area NO
Hillside Area NO
Alvernia Area NO
Angelica Area NO
Oakbrook Area NO

Ongoing Activities

Council of Neighborhoods
Newsletter ("Insights")
In Our Neighborhood
Neighborhood Strategy Team
Grant/proposal preparation
City Council / work sessions

Measuring Performance and Success

(Targets and goals are being determined)

Number of neighborhood organizations
Number of new neighborhood organizations
Number of projects/neighborhood organization
Number of certified neighborhood organizations
Number of successful neighborhood organizations
Volunteer labor hours used in neighborhood projects
Number of citizen codes inspectors trained
Number of CCI “citations”
Problem Oriented Policing participants
Number of POP problems “solved”
Total number of projects undertaken by neighborhood organizations
Level of Safety in neighborhoods as measured by RPD statistical data
Number of educational and leadership classes/training sessions
Number/amount of Mayor’s Neighborhood Matching Grants
Number of youth in mentoring partnerships
Number of mentors/organizations involved in partnerships
Involvement level and growth of Midnight Ministry
Square feet and number of graffiti eliminated/covered
Square feet and number of murals created

Expenditures	2005 Actual	2006 Budget	2007 Budget
Personnel	0	0	133,734
Operating	0	0	62,500